

WORLD RAINFOREST REPORT

no. 12

THE NORTHERN STAR, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1989, 13.

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PostOpinion

Welcome reprieve for nation's forests

CONTRARY to its apparent image of being a government of vested interest groups, the Chatichai Choonhavan Administration has taken a bold step that truly reflects the interest of the public — and of generations yet unborn.

The Cabinet's decision on Tuesday to comnolate on

The Environment Moves to the Center of Geopolitics

tens of thousands of young men and women out of their impoverished villages and into the cities to look for new hope. Massive deforestation in the region is a major cause of this social and economic problem.

Although the logging

has

in the well

Suddenly, the World Itself Is a World Issue

course of action to save what is left of the country's fast-dwindling forests. For decades, legal and illegal logging by timber companies, landless villagers wanting to farm and hilltribesmen practising slash-and-burn cultivation have depleted the country's forest cover to less than 20 per cent of the land mass.

Despite repeated outcries of conservationists, the problem of deforestation had, sad to say, been long neglected, probably

Costa Rica Debt-for-Nature Trade Due to Protect Land

From Reuters

WASHINGTON — Conservationists have made their largest single debt-for-nature swap, buying \$5.6 million in discounted debt for \$784,000 to help protect over 355,000 acres in Costa Rica.

Endangered Earth

Los Angeles Times January 12, 1989

Thais ban logging

BANGKOK. — The Thai Government on Tuesday ordered a nationwide ban on any further logging in the country's tropical forests.

The Cabinet, at its weekly meeting, issued a decree abrogating all timber concessions. It said compensation would be paid to companies affected.

The move followed November floods in southern Thailand which brought an avalanche of mud and timber from denuded hillsides crashing down on valleys.

Entire villages were wiped out and at least 350 people were killed.

Environmentalists had blamed loggers for stripping hills of trees that bound the earth together and formed a barrier to landslips. Two million cubic metres of timber are estimated to be removed annually.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1988

Rock star in bid to 'save the Amazon'

BRASILIA, Brazil, Monday (AP). — Sting, the British rock star, has met President Jose Sarney to propose a worldwide campaign to raise funds for a large Indian reservation and for Amazon preservation projects.

Sting, who is in Brazil for a week-long meeting among Brazilian Indians from 28 tribes and international ecologists, met Mr Sarney for two hours yesterday then gave a brief news conference.

"We would like to help Brazil create South America's largest Indian reservation and I am sure we could make lots of money in the United States, Japan and Europe for this project," Sting told reporters.

"We need the permission of the Brazilian people for this. We want to help Brazil save the Amazon."

The Brazilian Government has made clear it won't accept what it sees as recent foreign meddling in Amazon affairs.





Roll-call of the Assembled Beings ~ from the Soil ~

I am the Living Earth. I am the softened tissue of rocks; baked by the sun, split by ice, carved by water, and winnowed by the wind. I am interwoven by myriads of tiny plants and animals that pulse and breathe. I am the invisible universe of sparkling molecules in the infinity of living soils that bless the mantle of the globe.

I am the carpet of the biosphere, the floor of the forest, the seed bed of all plants; and my living substance nourishes all roots and all leaves that rely on the sun and rain to make green sculptures out of clay. In the tall dim damp rainforests I house the bulk of animal life, and support the endless upwards toiling of trees and coiling of vines. I am the bottom line of all grand symbiosis in forest biology. I am the source of mineral molecules in lovely flowers born high among the birds in the forest canopy; I am the energy sink, the lovely muddy frugal cemetery for recycling all the forest's elements in the transitions between life and death.

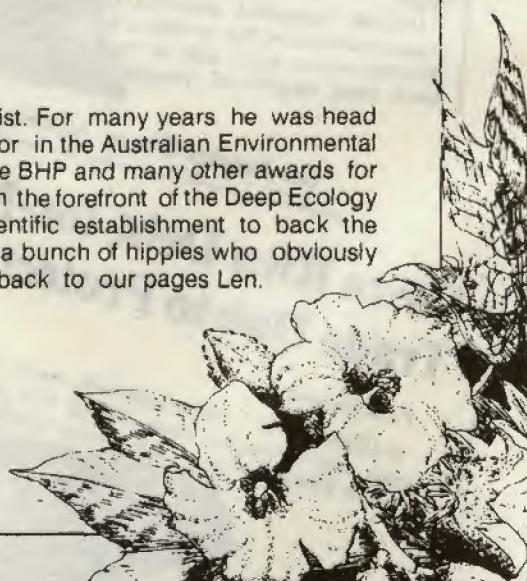
Touch me, smell me, I am your ultimate quality of life in ecology's profound cycles. See me, hear me, you humans who pass me by with your round computer heads rocking in the forest sky above me. Spare me a thought, you humans who depend on me; remember me, as I die before you, when you take away my forest coverings and still the microbes that give me life, me the Living Earth.

Take off your shoes, touch me with your fingers, let your skin tingle as it touches mine.

Shift your gaze sometimes from the stars and remember the heaven beneath your feet. Remember me when the sun burns and the waters gouge me, be kind to the forests that remain, and protect them from senseless cutting. Remember: like me, you are already eroding. Know this: like me, you are only dust when you are dead. Accept this: unlike you, I am closer to re-creation as the living earth, to genesis.

Len Webb 9.2.89

Len Webb is Australia's foremost rainforest ecologist. For many years he was head of the CSIRO's Rainforest Ecology Unit, now Professor in the Australian Environmental Studies Department at Griffith University, winner of the BHP and many other awards for excellence, he is also, as you will see from this essay, on the forefront of the Deep Ecology movement. He was the first member of the scientific establishment to back the conservationists at Terania Creek when we were just a bunch of hippies who obviously didn't know what they were talking about. Welcome back to our pages Len.



THAILAND BECOMES THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO BAN ALL LOGGING

On the 10th of January, the Government of Thailand approved two executive decrees terminating all 301 existing logging concessions in the country. Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said the government would ensure that concessionaires be given fair compensation. The decision followed flooding and mudslides due to deforestation killed at least 450 people. On January 12, the Post newspaper stated that "With banner headlines and commentaries, the Thai-language Press yesterday lauded the Government's decision to terminate all logging concessions in the country." The previous day's editorial in the country's largest English language newspaper, The Nation began thus: "The Cabinet took a giant step in protecting the country's remaining forests yesterday, an action which may save the Thai nation from further punishment by Mother Nature for the wanton forest destruction which has occurred in this country for decades. The decision to approve the draft of two royal decrees which will practically empower the Agriculture Minister to end all logging concessions nationwide, will be remembered as a turning point in Thai history. We fully support the decision. The move has come none too soon though, with only about 17% of forest cover remaining..." Yet here are we in Australia, with perhaps 5% forest cover remaining, yet both state and federal governments are going all out to convert our native forests to cellulose to make disposable chopsticks in Japan, or perhaps we will buy our forests back from Japan as cardboard boxes or toilet paper to convert them to CO₂ in the fastest possible time.

It will be argued that we must export our native forests to earn much-needed foreign exchange and to create "jobs". Yet we spend this foreign exchange on purchasing a billion dollars a year worth of timber products which we could be growing ourselves in Australian plantations. How long will it be before Thais (and Japanese!) refer to Australia as a Third World nation?

The Project for Ecological Recovery (1705 Rama 4 Rd. Bangkok 10500 Thailand) which was in the forefront of the successful campaign to stop the Nam Choan dam, has written to us asking that as many people and groups as possible write to the Government and the Nation Newspaper.

Letters should congratulate Thailand on this courageous and visionary move and exhort them to stand firm in the face of heavy pressure from the loggers and their friends in high places.

HE Gen Chatichai Choonhavan
Prime Minister of Thailand
Government House
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Bangkok 10300
THAILAND

Nationmail Editor
The Nation
59 Soi Saeng Chang
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This is undoubtedly an important and historic move and as you will see from the story in this issue about the Penan campaign, we are encouraging tourists to go to Thailand instead of Malaysia and let both governments know why. Moreover, the Thai Government has stated it's intention to increase forest cover in their country to 40%.

Nonetheless, it must be noted that unless there is a decrease in the consumption of timber, this will only increase the rate of destruction in countries Laos, Burma and Malaysia. Sooner or later we're all going to have to face the unpopular fact that in order for any resource to be a renewable resource, we can only consume the interest, the annual increment, not the capital. If we are to have any future we cannot go on consuming more than Nature can replace. Any local progress which merely shifts the burden and increases the entropy elsewhere cannot be of much significance. Thinking globally must accompany acting locally as no place will survive unless the global life-support systems continue to function, and this is the over riding issue from now on.

The Project for Ecological recovery has also asked us if we can help locate any environmentalist media experts who are already planning to come to Thailand or who could be induced to do so. They need an up-to-date video or slide show "on the increasingly widespread and successful people's movements here to save and restore local forests". Any takers?

Saturday View



Report from Sarawak.

Last December, after two months in West Germany, working for the reform of the World Bank and the banning of rainforest timber imports, I traveled to Sarawak to meet tribal activists and attend one of the logging blockade trials.

The December 12 trial of Musa Bong Mirai for allegedly burning down logging bridges



The Penans in court. Seated in the front row, from right to left:
Aping Mirai, Seng Turit, Loke Mirai, Balan Bun and Joseph Loke.

conducted in English, a language that the Penan do not understand at all. Translation into Malay was provided for the defendant, Musa, but his grasp of this language is not great. Compared to me, the Penan were the real foreigners in town, unfamiliar with courts and judges, or the highways and cities of industrial society.

As I sat in a pew at the back of the court, watching the passive faces of the Penan, knowing that they couldn't understand a word of the court proceedings concerning their fate, I felt a deep anger that the legal system was being used to further destroy Sarawak's tribal cultures. My only solace was the stories I had heard earlier that day about Iban communities who have successfully protected their tribal lands by destroying logging machines. For the Penan, it seems the Government is watching them too closely for such a solution to be successful.

The Iban are one of the largest tribes in Sarawak and in contrast to the Penan, are self assured and assertive people. Logging companies came to their rainforest lands near Bintulu in 1982 and were asked to leave by the Iban elders. The machines didn't stop working, so the Iban got hold of explosives and blew them up. Some 10 bulldozers and fifteen logging trucks were destroyed, forcing the company bankrupt. In 1986 another company tried to take their forests and met a similar fate. In the hills behind Bintulu the Iban rainforests and traditional culture still stand today.

As it happened, the case against Musa Bong Mirai was adjourned until November 1 1989 because the timber company whose bridges were burnt down failed to turn up in court. The company has probably received legal advice that the case would be difficult to win, so its interests are best served by keeping the court cases hanging over the Penan while it keeps logging their forests (Musa is out of jail but the prospect of a jail sentence and a heavy fine hang over his and his families head).

For the Penan and other tribes that will be in court this year for blockading logging operations, their trials provide an important way to let the world know the injustices being perpetrated against them.

was the first time that the Penan people were to be tried for actively defending their forests and culture. Seven other Penan had made the three day journey downstream to Miri to give moral support to Musa, who faces up to 7 years in jail and an unlimited fine if convicted. For most of the Penan, it was their first visit to Miri; an unpleasant coastal city, sick and swollen with oil money.

The court proceedings were

Everyone in Sarawak knows the rainforests there are being destroyed by the timber industry and that leading politicians and government officials are involved. Most people feel powerless to stop the devastation which funds both major political parties. The tribal people who have been blockading have no choice but to stand up to the loggers or lose their forests and cultures.



Aping Mirai and Seng Turit leaving the Magistrate's Court after their cases were postponed.

News of the tropical timber boycott in the West, and in particular the blockading of ships carrying Sarawak timber in Australian ports, was well reported in the Sarawak press and has started to break through the general fear and apathy about stopping the devastation. Images of ship blockades in Sydney Harbour and boycott actions in Europe are opening the minds of many Sarawak citizens to a global perspective on rainforest destruction and the possibility of protecting the remaining rainforests in Sarawak.

For the Malaysian authorities, ship blockades are a clear message that many in the West don't want their bloody timber and that we support the tribal logging blockades.

For the tribal people already blockading, news of tropical timber ship blockades in Australia has given strength and inspiration to continue, knowing that elsewhere people understand their struggle and are matching their resolve to save Sarawak's rainforests.

I came away from Sarawak deeply impressed by the commitment of the tribal people to stop the logging and firmly believing that a tropical timber boycott and ship blockades are essential ways that we in the west can help save Sarawak's rainforests.

TIMBER BLOCKADES SPREAD TO SABAH

Some 200 villagers in Sabah's Keningau district have set up road-blocks to back their demand for compensation for damage caused by logging. Sabah, the Malaysian State of North Borneo, is one of the world's major exporters of tropical hardwoods.

According to a press account (The Star 7 December 1988), on 6 December, the villagers gave the logging companies five days to comply with their demands 'otherwise they will take the law into their own hands.' The villagers are reported to have threatened to burn down bridges linking five logging camps in the area.

Responding to news of the blockades, Sabah's Commissioner of Police, Syed Othman Syed Ali, warned that the police would invoke the Internal Security Act against people involved in -- Hit. Malaysia's draconian Internal Security Act was initially introduced by the British colonial authorities to aid in their struggle against communist insurgents. Since Malaysian independence the revised Act has been repeatedly invoked against Malaysian citizens engaged in civil rights, environmental and peaceful political actions. Under the Act, citizens may be detained indefinitely without charge or trial.

The State police chief, Syed Ali, warned that the ISA empowered police to act against people holding illegal assemblies or gatherings.

Survival International, 310 Edgware Road, London W2 1DY, UK

Received via fax January 31

STATEMENT BY PENAN LEADERS AND REPRESENTATIVES, MADE IN MARUDI, BARAM ON 29 JANUARY 1989

We are the leaders and representatives of many Penan communities in the Baram district of Sarawak. Many of us were arrested between 18 and 21st January 1989. Altogether 105 were arrested in January 1989 and 128 between November 1988 to January 1989. These arrests are in relation to blockades of logging roads.

On 27th January 27 of us were released on surety. Another 10 (from Long Late and Long Leng) are still in custody because they were asked to put up bail of cash \$1,000 each and we cannot raise this money for them. Another 24 from Long Bangan are expected to be charged in court early in February 1989.

Being in Marudi together after our release, we and some friends held a meeting on 28 and 29 January and we made the following resolutions;

1. We feel it is not fair to ask 10 of our friends from Long Late and Long Lang to put up \$1,000 bail each. Since they are very poor their families and friends cannot raise the money. So they remain in jail and may have to stay there for months or years until their case is heard and settled. We request the authorities concerned to change their bail from cash bail to bail on surety like the rest of us were given. Their children and wives now suffer because there are so few people to harvest the rice and the children will suffer food shortage and hunger. 2. We wish to explain the background to the blockades that led to our arrest in January 1989. For a long time we have suffered from the logging activities. Our forest resources are gone. Our food supply is reduced. The river waters are polluted. Our rice farms and fruit trees are damaged. The wild animals have run away. Many complaints were sent by us to the district office, to the police, and other state authorities but they were not listened to. Some of us went to Kuala Lumpur to meet Ministers who promised to help. But nothing happened. Our blockades which started in March 1987 were taken down by the authorities in October 1987. From October 1987 to August 1988 the situation worsened for us very much. The logging companies chopped the trees even faster. The state government introduced a new law to make it an offense to blockade logging roads, to prevent us from defending the forest. But many of our communities have been suffering beyond endurance. We see our forests being logged away, our beautiful rivers made cloudy and poisonous by pollution. We suffer common problems of lack of food, health problems, some children have also died of hunger. The big soil erosion caused by logging silted our rivers. Rivers that were once so deep, are now made shallow by silt. As a result there was serious flooding, and a lot of our food farms were damaged.

So at the end of 1988 we were forced by our desperate situation to blockade again. Altogether there were around ten areas with blockades. But now the forest officials and police have come to our blockades and arrested us under the new forest law (Section 90B of the Sarawak Forest Ordinance) which forbids blockades.

Our stand is that;

- a) We have to set up the blockades on our customary land, which is the land the timber companies wrongly used to build their logging roads and to log without our permission.
- b) Therefore the forest law is not fair that forbids us from defending our own property. We are the owners preventing outsiders from coming onto our property. We are not doing something wrong on other people's property.
- c) We therefore ask the government to repeal Section 90B of the Forest Ordinance because it goes against our right to defend our property.
- d) The authorities should not arrest any more native people since the question of who has rights over customary land is not yet decided or settled.
- e) The authorities should drop all charges against all those charged for blockading. Please don't use laws which are just created against us who are so poor and just trying to survive on this earth.

f) We appeal to the authorities to be more understanding of our problems of survival. Please don't treat us as criminals or culprits, like people who have no rights. We Penan are also human beings like everyone else, with the same rights to survive and to live on this earth. We are the poorest people in the country. We are the victims of logging, of people from the big modern outside world who don't understand our system or our right, and want to take our resources away. We have always depended on the government to protect us who are weak against those who are strong. We are not culprits or criminals. We just want to live, like everyone else. Please help us, don't harass us and jail us. Jail is very difficult for us. The jail rooms are very small and we are very cramped inside. We are used to the big forest and being free in natural space. Being cramped in small rooms is very difficult for us.

3. We love our land and forest very much, which our forefathers gave to us. We don't want to leave this land. Although a lot of the forest where we live is already gone, yet we are willing to live here. Most of us have applied to the government to grant us communal forest. Under the state land laws, we can ask for communal forest to be set aside for our use, in areas near or surrounding our settlements. This is not too much to ask for. We have been here for generations. So much land is already given to the timber companies. We want just a little for ourselves, to know it is protected from loggers and other people. Please approve our request for communal forest and allow us a little space to survive.

4. We have heard that the Thai government banned logging completely in January 1989 because logging destroyed people's environment and livelihood. We too request the Malaysian and Sarawak government to ban logging completely in Sarawak. Are we asking for much? Are we asking for something impossible? We don't think so. We are just asking for something the Thai people asked for, and the Thai government agreed, because it also realised that logging so badly affected the ecology and the people's lives. Surely our own government also knows about the logging and its bad effects here. If logging is banned here, it will protect our forests that are left, and it will guarantee us some remaining resources to live with. It will protect our environment. Logging will make all the trees disappear in a few years. Then the whole country won't have wood or forests left. For our sake and for the nation's sake, please stop logging now.

5. Because of logging, our food and health situation is now very bad. We request the health authorities to improve its services to us, to set up health clinics at our settlements. We request clean water to be supplied to us since the rivers are polluted. We request that schools be set up in our settlements so our children may have a better future. We want good development like this.

6. There was a lot of news about a \$1 million fund for Penans and a State Penan Committee set up by the state government. But we are not happy because we have not yet seen any benefits from these moves. The government should always consult with us on how to improve our situation.

7. We appeal to all authorities in Sarawak and Malaysia to sincerely do something to help us. Really we feel at a loss and very desperate because our hopes for help are nearly gone. Our situation becomes worse all the time. Yet people harass us more and put us in jail. We hope in future you will sincerely help us.

8. We ask for help from people all over the world. We are people with a proud culture and a way of life that is based on our forest and land. Don't take our forest and culture and our dignity away. We thank everyone who thinks of us and helps us solve our problems. We know there are many people in many countries who care for us even though you are so far away. It is this knowing that keeps us alive. May God bless all of you. (Statement summarises discussions over two days with over sixty Penan and read out to them and amended according to further discussion; signed and thumbprinted including by six village chiefs. Statement signed and endorsed by Penan leaders and representatives from the following communities: Long Belok; Long Late; Long Buang, Long Lilin; 'Long Puloh Layua; Long Leng; Long Laka; Batu Bangan; Long Iman; Long Kidah; Long Lutin; Long Kawi; Long Bangan.)



GROUP SHIP ACTIONS

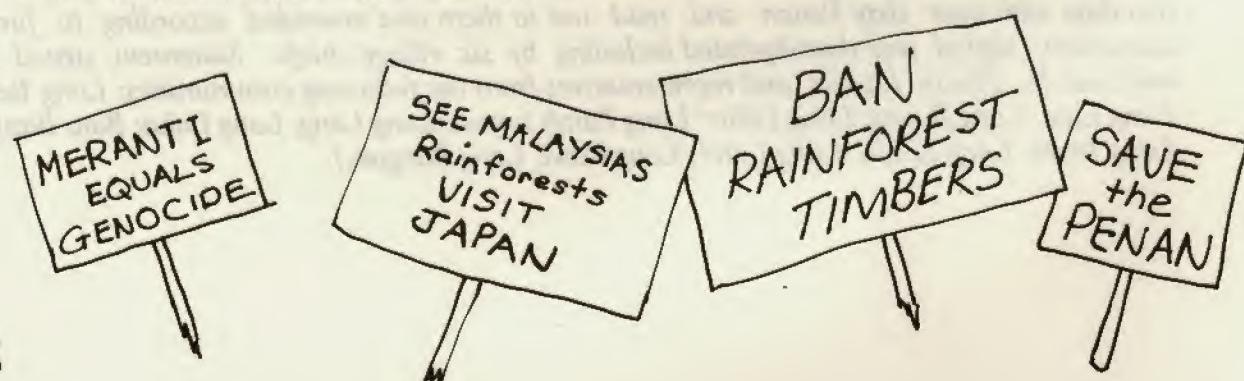
Since Christmas the Sydney Rainforest Action Group (SRAG) has organised two demonstrations on the docks at Darling Harbour during the unloading of ships carrying rainforest timber from South East Asia. Much of this timber comes from Sabah and Sarawak in Malaysia where the courageous Penan and Kelabit people and their supporters are facing long imprisonment as they continue to fight to save their precious rainforest home. The ship "Rimi" docked in Sydney on December 27th and the "Pacific Swan" on Monday January 23rd. SRAG is making a point of meeting all ships as they come in or as they are unloaded and is carrying on negotiations with the Waterside Workers Federation to obtain some restriction on the unloading of ships carrying rainforest timber.

For the "Rimi" action there were approximately thirty protesters present all wearing black as a symbol of mourning. It was a very moving silent protest which took place as the timber was unloaded from the ship by silent waterside workers. It received broad media coverage: SBS played a three minute segment in their news and it was also covered by ABC Radio National, 2JJ, the Sydney Morning Herald and various commercial radio stations.

The following day a SRAG member was interviewed by a freelancer for the BBC who was putting together a radio programme on tropical deforestation to be broadcast throughout Asia and the Pacific.

The "Pacific Swan" action was smaller but equally effective. The group is currently looking at working more closely with the Paddlers for Peace, singing environmental songs, doing some dramatic street theatre for the cameras and generally finding ways of making the actions large, effective and educational.

We're also planning a large action at Sydney Airport on April 24th to coincide with the Penan Trials - calling for a consumer boycott of Malaysian Airlines and Malaysian products. The feedback from Sarawak is that government officials are worried about the public support for the ship actions in Australia. We can always benefit from ideas, participation and support - or even donations so if you can offer any of the above please contact: Keith Tarlo on 02 267 7929 or Barbara Hatten on 02 365 3837.



24th APRIL 1989

Let's make it a day that the Malaysian Authorities won't forget!

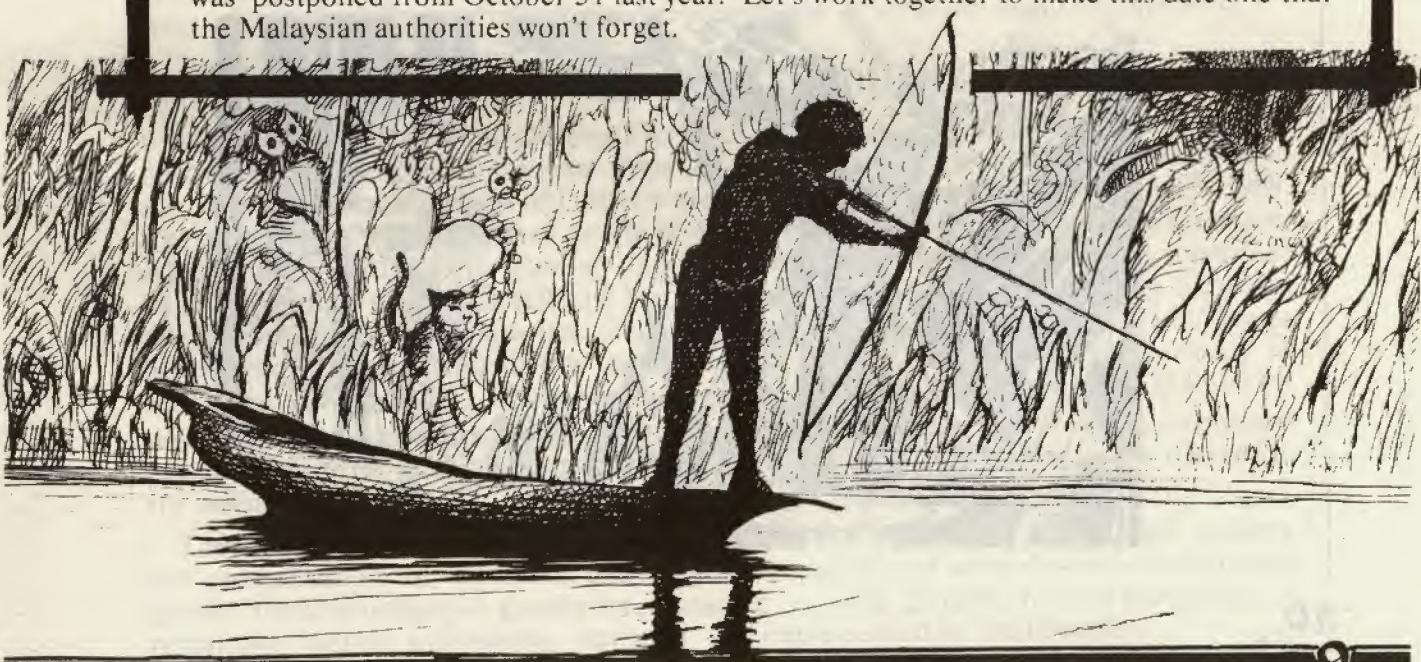
Following the recent arrest of 81 Penan and their detention without access to lawyers and family for up to 14 days, rainforest groups around the world have decided to step up the boycott campaign in solidarity with the blockading tribes.

Some rainforest action groups have started a boycott campaign on all Malaysian products until the rights of the tribal people in Sarawak are respected and the logging of their rainforests ceases. Already Sydney Rainforest Action Group is planning airport actions, protesting with banners and leaflets as people check in and board MAS (Malaysian Airlines) flights and planes bound for Malaysia. They are also making up a poster for the windows of travel agencies, telling people to avoid Malaysia. Malaysian advertising billboards are being "buggered up" to a more accurate message on what is happening in that country and encouraging consumers to avoid Malaysian products while the rainforest logging continues.

At the moment a blockade of ships bringing timber from Sarawak is happening about every couple of weeks, with RAGs in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne participating.

Please get involved in ship, airport or other boycott actions. We really have to match the new level of intimidation against the blockading tribes taking place in Sarawak.

The campaign is gaining momentum, and there are plenty of ways to keep it growing to the next day of international actions on April 24, the trial date for the 42 Kayans whose case was postponed from October 31 last year. Let's work together to make this date one that the Malaysian authorities won't forget.



Dear Gareth

The Australian Government is aware of the plight of the Penan and other tribal groups in Sarawak, but has not received enough pressure to act. Senator Richardson stated recently at a national meeting of environment groups that he was ready to investigate the issue of tropical timber imports with a view to imposing restrictions. So far nothing has happened.

Richardson will act if letters land on his desk. The best way to make sure he gets to hear of your concern is to contact your local member of parliament, either Federal or State, preferably both. By seeing your local member, you accomplish two jobs; making her aware of the problem and also making sure that your message gets through to the Federal Minister. Letters to a Minister from the general public are usually signed by someone else in the Minister's office but letters from members of parliament, State and Federal, will almost always be signed by the Minister. These letters must also be replied to quickly. It is also useful to ask some questions in your letter, as these must be addressed in the Government's reply.

→ Contact your local member of parliament about: ←

- the blatant contradiction whereby much of our rainforests are protected from logging yet 90 per cent of the rainforest timber we use is imported, helping to destroy the rainforests of our near neighbours. Ask that a ban on the import of rainforest timbers should be imposed immediately. This matter should be referred on to Graham Richardson, Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories; and Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Trade.

- the concern/anger/outrage you experience knowing that Australia is involved in the ethnocide of the Penan people and other rainforest cultures while their forests are destroyed to produce tropical timber. Demand that this matter be raised with the Malaysian authorities and ask that this be at the top of the agenda of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), to be held in Malaysia later this year. This matter should be referred on to Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

- the fact that both State and Federal Governments still use rainforest timbers in construction projects. Demand that the Governments immediately stop this practice and use only plantation and recycled timbers. This matter should be referred to Stuart West, Federal Minister for Administrative Services and to your State Minister in the same position.





WEST GERMANY Action for the Penan Local Government Rainforest Timber Bans.

In West Germany 30 local councils have banned the use of rainforest timbers in their own building projects and another 200 councils are due to vote on the issue in the coming year. The bans have followed lobbying by rainforest action groups who are using this approach as a practical way to diminish rainforest timber consumption at the local level while still working on the much longer and harder project to get their Federal Government to ban the import of rainforest timbers.

Several Councils have not only stopped using rainforest timbers in their own projects but now recommend that all building activity in their district use alternative materials. In Switzerland the national rail authority has agreed to no longer use rainforest timbers.

A similar campaign at the local government level could be very effective in Australia, where the struggle for the protection of our own rainforest areas has already created awareness of the importance of rainforests.

Petitioning a local council on this issue is a manageable task for a small group. In some cases in West Germany, one dedicated individual was able to get their council to ban rainforest timber within a year of starting lobbying. A group of architects successfully petitioned their local council to stop using rainforest timbers by explaining the real costs of using rainforest timbers and presenting the alternative materials available..

RAINFOREST MEMORANDUM IN WEST GERMANY

A memorandum, outlining the West German Government's involvement with rainforest destruction and proposing positive steps for rainforest conservation, was presented to the West German members of Parliament and the press in Bonn on 12th of January 1989. The memorandum was initiated by the Workgroup for Rainforest and Species Protection, ARA, and the Institute for Ecology and Action Anthropology, INFOE. It was supported by 73 German environmental and human rights organisations, representing 5 million people. It provides an important step in linking the campaigns in support of indigenous peoples and the protection of the rainforests and is the first attempt in West Germany to rally mass support for a change in government policy on these issues. Rainforest destruction and ethnocide funded by the West German Government through such projects as the Carajas Iron Ore scheme and aid to assist the tropical timber industry are covered in the memorandum.

The memorandum asks the Government to ban the importation of rainforest timbers, pay compensation for rainforest damage already caused and scrap the current aid model geared towards industrial growth by replacing it with projects for the protection of remaining tropical ecosystems, designed and implemented by local peoples.



FEED A METER, SAVE A FOREST

Two thirds of the world's living species inhabit tropical rainforests. But according to Stanford University's Center for Conservation Biology, an estimated 74,000 acres of the lush land are destroyed every day. Staggered by those statistics, the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers has devised an "Ecosystem Survival Plan" to buy up and preserve the world's tropical habitats. The plan depends on an unlikely ecological device; the little loved parking meter.

The San Francisco Department of Public Works is donating to Bay Area zoos old meters that will be transformed into "interactive conservation tools." Each meter will bear the slogan; "Give your change to make a change." When someone deposits a coin, a picture of an anteater or jaguar will pop up instead of a time arrow and sprint across the meter.

The plan has real earning potential. About 114 million people visit U.S. zoos each year "If every visitor put 50 cents in the meter instead of buying a bag of peanuts, we could purchase and protect 4.8 million acres in the tropics every year - forever," says San Francisco zoo keeper Norm Gershenson. Five zoos in northern California have already agreed to install the meters, and other parks have expressed interest. For their first undertaking, zoo keepers want to buy land in the Guanacaste National Park project in Costa Rica, which will eventually preserve 293 square miles of dry rainforest. They calculate that \$300 will buy 2.5 acres; the 200 orchids, 10,000 mushrooms, 200 frogs, 1 million ants and 4.7 billions raindrops that come with the land - along with anteaters, tapirs and jaguars - will make the deal a steal.

GREENING GUATEMALA

A U.S. independent power producer will spend \$2 million to plant 52 million trees in Guatemala to offset the carbon dioxide emissions of one of its coal-fired power plants. Such plants contribute to the greenhouse effect. The company, AES Thames, a Connecticut-based subsidiary of Applied Energy Services of Arlington, Virginia, worked with the World Resources Institute to develop a program linking alleviation of the greenhouse effect with the need to save tropical forests. Through a grant to CARE the project will help 40,000 smallholder farmers in Guatemala to plant more than 52 million trees over a 10-year period. The project is the first attempt to slow the greenhouse effect by mitigating emissions of a coal-fired power plant. CARE will work with the Guatemalan forestry service and the U.S. Peace Corps on forest management and soil conservation. For more information contact: Paul Faeth at World Resources Institute.





PARAGUAY



WORLD BANK PROJECT THREATENS FOREST INDIANS.

A LARGE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT THREATENS TO DESTROY FOREST TRIBES IN EASTERN PARAGUAY. INDIAN LEADERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS HAVE APPEALED FOR INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL HAS CALLED ON THE WORLD BANK TO HALT FURTHER LOANS TO PARAGUAY UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT TAKES URGENT STEPS TO SECURE INDIAN LANDS. PLEASE ACT NOW TO SUPPORT THIS CAMPAIGN.

Approximately 1600 forest Indians of the Ache and Mbya tribes face the loss of their traditional lands in Eastern Paraguay as the World Bank-funded Caa Zapá Rural Development Project opens up the area, with road-building and colonisation schemes. The \$54 million project (with \$31 million contributed by the Bank) is centered on a forested area of 381,000 hectares. Three of the Project's eleven components, land colonisation and titling, road construction and the indigenous component, will have a direct impact on the tribal peoples.

There are plans to grant land titles to 2000 Paraguayan families within the Project area and also resettle several of the 21 Indian communities. The Bank has previously funded several agricultural development and road-building projects in Paraguay. They have resulted in serious social and environmental problems.

The approximately 100 Ache Indians now precariously settled within the Project area, are among the few survivors of a nomadic tribe which once occupied a vast area of Eastern Paraguay. Hundreds of Ache have been killed or enslaved, following the invasion of their forests in the past decades, by loggers, ranchers and settlers - prompting charges of genocide against the Paraguayan Government. Many have also died of newly introduced diseases. The Mbya, who make up the bulk of the region's Indian population are settled agriculturalists, who have maintained their traditions in the face of intense pressure and have successfully rejected missionary advances. Like the Ache they now face a potentially terminal crisis.

A recent World Bank commissioned report on the impact of the Caa Zapá Project was highly critical of the failure of Paraguay's Indian Agency, INDI, to take any steps (despite the existence of protective legislation) to safeguard Indian lands and resources. It concluded that the Bank's confidence in INDI currently under investigation for the theft of timber from Indian lands, was misplaced. An internal World Bank policy review also admits that the Ache and Mbya 'remain without even minimal land tenure security'. It reveals that not one of the four protective measures, recommended by the Bank to safeguard Indian rights, had been enacted by the Paraguayan authorities.

To date, the Bank has disbursed \$5 million and the Project is well behind schedule. It was held up by the Government's failure to agree to the terms of their contribution. Another factor was the reported reluctance of the region's major landowners, among them the daughter

of Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner, to relinquish any lands to colonisation and Indian occupation.

At an important conference in the Paraguayan capital Asuncion, Indian leaders and representatives of Church and human rights organisations, recently condemned the 'systematic' failure of the Paraguayan Government and the World Bank to respond to legitimate Indian demands for secure title to their ancestral lands. They declared that the Caa Zapá Project, designed in part to benefit the region's Indian tribes, has in practice made their situation worse. Indian protests at the invasion of their lands and the wanton destruction of their forests by large scale farming, ranching and logging operations, have gone unheeded. The conference charged the Paraguayan Government and the Bank with responsibility for the imminent destruction of Ache and Mbya communities and appealed to the international community for support.

Source: Survival International.



Source: Kohner Stadtanzeiger

PHILIPPINES



Indiscriminate attacks on tribal communities in the Philippines continue unabated. In the first week of October two villages of the Bagobo people, a Manobo people on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao, were shelled by the Philippines military with 105 mm howitzers placed in the valley. The attack, in the province of Davao del Sur, forced about one hundred families to evacuate their communities and seek refuge in the lowlands.

The attack by the army follows a pattern. On 29 May this year, the 30th Integrated Battalion of the Philippines Army launched aerial and field bombardments against five Higaonon communities in the remote province of Agusan del Norte, also on Mindanao. Helicopter gunships and World War II-era bombers strafed the villages with machine gun fire and dropped more than 80 bombs on the communities over a ten-day period. Refugees report the helicopters pursued them with machine gun fire as they sought shelter in nearby forested areas.

The attack marked the beginning of a seven-week campaign of terror which prompted the complete evacuation of more than a dozen Higaonon villages along the border of Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur provinces. During this period, four Higaonon men, including a 14 year old boy, are reported to have been summarily executed by the military on suspicion of having assisted anti-government rebels. Four tribal leaders and approximately 30 other Higaonon men are said to have been arrested. It is not yet known if they have been released.

Today some four hundred Higaonon and Manobo families are reported to be in lowland evacuation areas or hiding in the forests. They are in desperate need of food shelter, medical assistance and clean water. Many have refused to return to their lands and rebuild their homes for fear of being killed by the military.

Background:

The Higaonon and Manobo are indigenous to northeast Mindanao. Together with more than a dozen other peoples on the island, they call themselves the Lumad - the indigenous peoples of Mindanao. For the past one hundred years, settlers from northern and central islands have forced many Lumad communities from their ancestral lands and into the more marginal agricultural and deforested areas. More recently, Philippine and multi-national logging, mining and agri-business corporations have forced many Lumad communities from their lands in order to exploit the natural resources.

In response to encroachment of the Nasipit Lumber Company (NALCO) into tribal lands, Higaonon communities declared a 10,000 hectare forest reserve within their lands and vowed to defend it. Much of this reserve lies within the area leased to NALCO by the Philippines Government. The Bagobo, on the other hand, claim that military attacks are directed at them because they oppose a government plan to build a geo-thermal power plant on their lands. As in other areas where tribal Filipinos have defended their lands and forests *, the Philippines military has joined forces with loggers and developers to crush tribal resistance under the guise of carrying out counter-insurgency operations against anti-government rebels (* Survival International Report 1987 Counter Insurgency and Tribal Peoples in the Philippines).

In a letter sent to Filipino Church and human rights groups in early July, ten Higaonon leaders appealed for assistance. They said 'Because of fear we have sought refuge in the forest for more than one month. Many of us are sick because of lack of food and shelter. This is the third time that we have been bombed since President Aquino came to power. We haven't received any assistance from the government. Instead they are forcing us to go down to the lowlands. Going down means killing us because our source of life is the forest and our lands' (translated from Higaonon).

Source. Survival International

PALAWAN APPEN

Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network c/o Sahabat Alam Malaysia 37 Lorong Birch
10250 Penang, West malaysian

We are pleased to inform you that the Asia-Pacific Peoples Environment Network (APPEN) in collaboration with Sahabat Alam Malaysia (FoE Malaysia) fully supports the project "Save Palawan - 1989" launched by Amici della Terra-Italia (FoE Italy).

The Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network (APPEN) is an informal coalition of over 300 groups in the Asia-Pacific region. We also link up with networks in North America, Europe, Latin America, Africa and other Third World countries.

The predator attacks of industrializing forces and political interests are now indiscriminately exploiting the indigenous people of Palawan and their natural environment.

We are disgusted and horrified that in spite of all the talk about genuine reform under the Aquino administration, all we see is rather a deliberate and ruthless attempt to accelerate the irreversible depletion of the Philippines' natural resources. It is indeed a doomsday scenario. The primary rainforest of Palawan is disappearing at an alarming rate due to the indiscriminate logging operations. The Philippine Government, far from respecting the constitutional civic and ethnic right of the indigenous people, is leasing their ancestral land to Japanese companies. Concessions are also granted as political favours and the harvested areas are never reforested, paving the way for illegal farmers.

The destruction and exploitative approach to the primary forest of Palawan is a clear example of the patronage of dirty political games and of corrupt and unscrupulous government officials.

The Batak tribe, whose descendants were among the first people to arrive on this island some 40'000 years ago, are now crying out in anguish. Their population today has been reduced to little more than 400 individuals. But only half of them can still be considered of "pure" Batak descent. The massive and irrational destruction of Palawan forests is forcing the Batak and thousands of other tribal people to face starvation and malnutrition, leading them to a physical and cultural extinction.

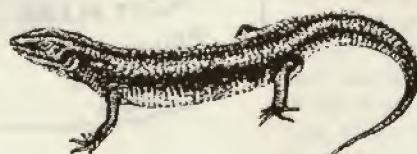
Rainforest Information Centre representative, Nick Hopkins, recently returned from Palawan confirming both the complexity and urgency of the problem. 19,000 ha. are being destroyed annually on this island, considered to be the last environmental frontier in the Philippines. A more complete up-date will be published in WRR No.13

Meanwhile please address politely-worded, reasoned letters to: President Corazon C. Aquino Malacanang Palace Manila Philippines

Mr Ramon Mitra Speaker, House of Representatives c/o Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources Visayas Avenue Quezon City, Metro-Manila Philippines

It is important that you send letters of solidarity and copies of your responses to the following organisations in the Philippines: Executive Director Haribon Foundation 1200 Jorge Bacobo St. Ermita, Manila Philippines

Chairman Philippine Federation for Environmental Concern c/o Dept. of Forest Biological Science College of Forestry University of the Philippines a Los Banos College Laguna - 3720 Philippines



KEEP IRIAN JAYA SCOTT-FREE.

Scott Paper, 1, Scott Plaza, Philadelphia, Pa. 19113, USA.

Dr Mr Lippincott, I am writing to you in relation to Scott Paper company's proposed plan for a US\$600,000,000 investment in a 500,000 acre fast-growing eucalyptus plantation and pulp factory in the Marauke province of Irian Jaya.

The establishment of such a large plantation would obviously have far-reaching effects not only ecologically but socially and I am concerned as to whether your company has considered these issues. From the little information we have about your plans, it is believed that the plantation is planned for the Southern Lowlands of Irian Jaya, home to the Marind, Yei and Kanum peoples, whose livelihood is derived from the already existing forests. Will your plantation infringe on these peoples forests, and if so how are you to obtain the land, which traditionally but not officially belongs to them? How will you obtain the raw materials you need initially, to make your investment financially worthwhile and will you simply harvest the existing forests and thereby deprive the people of their sago palms coconuts, bamboo stands and Pandanus groves? Also, where do you plan to derive your labour force from: the local people or do you mean to provide your own labour force from Java, the most populated island in Indonesia? If you do harvest the existing forests, the effect on the environment is of major concern.

The native forests are home to many wild animals which simply could not exist in a monoculture, such as the one you are planning. As well, the type of fast-growing eucalyptus forest which would replace the native one has a particularly disastrous effect on water levels; when 40 feet high transpires about 80 gallons of water a day potentially drying up springs and causing a drop in the water table.

Another crucial issue is the disposal of the polluting waste from the pulp factory; would it be dumped in the river, or treated properly? And is Scott intending to continue its practice of using Dioxin to kill unwanted tree species?

All these questions are of vital importance to the future of the people and land of the Marauke province and must be dealt with thoroughly before continuing with the proposal. I urge you to consider whether Scott Paper Company's scheme is actually beneficial or detrimental to the future of the Merauke province, and to act accordingly.

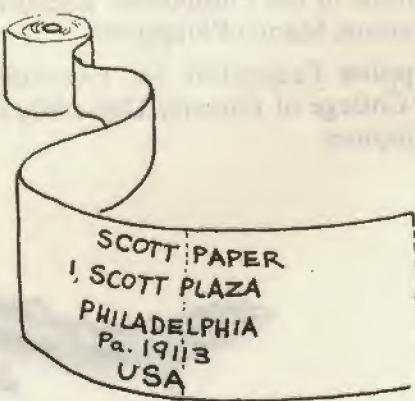
A high-profile company such as Scott Paper Company must realise its actions are accountable to the general public and if those actions are shown to be immoral or exploitative, then the repercussions in terms of public relations could be severely detrimental to the company. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Sincerely

Julie Hutley

R.I.C. Co-ordinator

Write letters to:



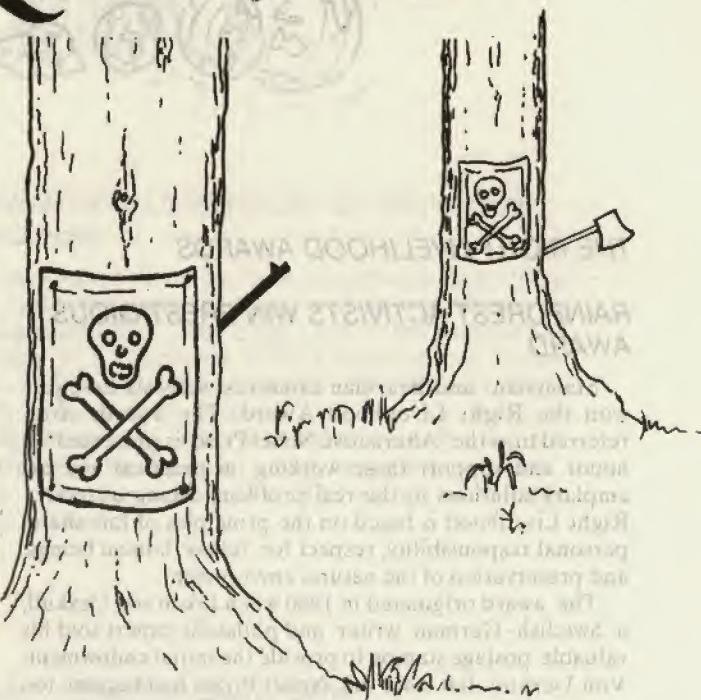
WORLD ROUNDUP

Lifestyles in rich countries blamed for tropical rainforest destruction.

Every year, up to 50 million acres of tropical rainforest are chopped down to satisfy the wasteful lifestyles of the rich countries. In Japan, almost all restaurants and canteens are now serving food with waribashi, or wooden disposable chopsticks.

Until recently, chopsticks were washed after meals, and used for years. But the waribashi has changed all that. The disposable chopsticks are simply thrown away after a single use. This is a terrible waste, which contributes to the chopping of tropical trees,' says Yasuko Higuchi, member of the Japanese committee on Asian Tropical Forests, which has launched an anti-waribashi campaign among Japanese consumers. According to the group's research, 20 billion pairs of waribashi were used in 1983. That makes it 170 sets of chopsticks thrown away a year for each Japanese. Ms Yasuko estimates that half of the wood used to make the waribashi comes from abroad, and most of that from Southeast Asia. 'The waribashi is symbolic of the Japanese lifestyle based on mass consumption and waste,' says Ms Yasuko. 'Ordinary Japanese, specially housewives, can link this wastefulness in Japan with tropical forest logging through our anti-waribashi campaign.' The waribashi uses up 200'000 cubic metres of timber a year, a sizeable amount, but only 0.2 % of Japan's total wood usage. Japan, the most voracious user of world tropical timber, imported 12.8 million cubic metres of logs from Southeast Asia in 1985, or 64 per cent of the region's total exports. Almost all the wood is imported as raw logs, processed into plywood and sawn timber, then converted into building materials, household furniture, cabinets and wooden packing cases.

Third World Network Features



Sri Lanka A 'Jungle Law' saves forests.

Illicit felling of timber in the country's forest reserves is nothing new.

At the rate of 42 000 hectares or 160 square miles per year that the nation's forests are being cut down, since the nineteen fifties it is estimated that Sri Lanka would have no forests by the year 2030. What is new is that over the last couple of weeks the illicit felling of timber has come to a complete halt.

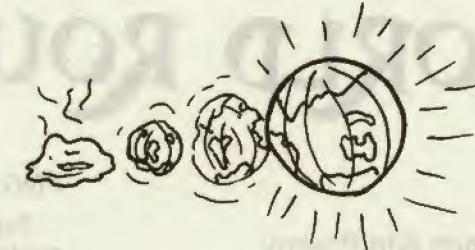
What the Forest Department and the law enforcement authorities could not do, has been achieved by the appearance of a number of red lettered posters beginning with the Sinharaja forest. Soon the posters appeared in other forest reserves too. The Uda Walawe, Gal Oya, Lahugala, Yala, Wilpattu and Ritigala natural reserves are some of these areas. Letters containing death threats to the timber fellers had also been circulated.

Referring to the illicit felling of timber as a national crime (Jathika aparadaya) the offenders were to be given a summary trial followed by sudden execution. According to Dr. Kotagama, a lecturer in Zoology at the Open University, there have been reports that groups of armed illicit timber fellers had been shot at in the Lahugala and Sinharaja forests and had fled the scene. The curious thing was that these posters signed by the acronym JVP could do what the forestry authorities themselves had wanted but could not do for so many years.

Nature conservationists have welcomed these posters put up threatening with death those engaged in illicit felling of forests and poaching in national parks and reserves. Secretary of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society, Mr Lal Anthonis welcomed the conservation effort on the part of the JVP in a recent press statement:

"Those responsible for conservation have not succeeded in implementing the relevant laws. Let's hope at least this move will help curb illicit felling and poaching". Director of the Wildlife Conservation Department, Maj. Gen. Mano Madawela is also reported to have welcomed the conservation effort.

WORLD ROUNDUP



THE RIGHT LIVELIHOOD AWARDS

RAINFOREST ACTIVISTS WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Malaysian and Brazilian rainforest activists have just won the Right Livelihood Award. The award, often referred to as the "Alternative Nobel Prize" is presented "to honor and support those working on practical and exemplary solutions to the real problems facing us today." Right Livelihood is based on the principles of fair share, personal responsibility, respect for fellow human beings, and preservation of the natural environment.

The award originated in 1980 when Jakob von Uexkull, a Swedish-German writer and philatelic expert sold his valuable postage stamps to provide the initial endowment. Von Uexkull felt that the Nobel Prizes had become too narrow in focus, ignoring much important work and knowledge vital for the survival of mankind.

JOSE LUTZENBERGER is regarded as the father of the environmental movement in Brazil and one of the most effective environmental activists in Latin America. Lutzenberger left the chemical industry in 1972 to start a vigorous and successful campaign against the overuse of agrochemicals. He is recognized internationally for his tireless work on deforestation and regenerative agriculture and waste disposal, illustrating a systematic application of scientific and technical knowledge to resolve environmental problems. Lutzenberger will be speaking at the rainforest conference in Seattle in November (see calendar).

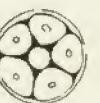
SAHABAT ALAM-Friends of the Earth-Malaysia (co-publisher of World Rainforest Report) has led the desperate struggle against the massive tropical logging (75 acres per hour in 1983) that is systematically destroying the culture, livelihood and environment of the native people. The Award recognizes S. Mohamed WORLD RAINFOREST REPORT NO. 12 Idris (president), Harrison Ngau (director), and the Penan people who at great personal risk have inspired and continue to lead the fight against the demolition of one of South East Asia's greatest remaining rainforests.

The recipients of the Right Livelihood Award are chosen by an international jury honoring visionary yet practical work in such areas as human rights, environmental protection, peace and disarmament, architecture, economics and the preservation of traditional knowledge. Lutzenberger and Sahabat Alam will share the \$100,000 cash prize with a third winner.



CANADA Reality?

An International Forum on Sustainable Development Options was held in Toronto during the 1988 Economic Summit. Some 250 representatives from environment and development groups from countries around the world attended the forum in Toronto, Canada, last June 17-20, 1988. At this forum, Fr Thomas Berry, a theologian and founder and executive director of Riverdale Center for Religious Research in New York, and whose current work concentrates on balancing human economics with the economics of the environment, and delivered an inspiring talk entitled "Ethics for the Ecological Age." He asserts that "History is now being made, not between nations, but between humans and the earth. Democracy is a conspiracy of humans against the world." What is needed is a new biocracy, a new species economy. "Humans are an abstraction. The only reality is of the earth."



U.S.A. Grateful Dead Fight For Forests

On September 24th The Grateful Dead, Bruce Hornsby and the Range, and Suzanne Vega, along with special guests Hall and Oats, Mick Taylor and Jack Casady performed at the Madison Square Gardens in New York City. The proceeds from this historical concert will benefit the work of the Rainforest Action Network, Cultural Survival, and Greenpeace USA.

Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir and Mickey Hart of the Dead held a press conference before the show outlining the rainforest issues and their commitment to continuing the fight for as long as rainforests are threatened. Other members Bill Kreutzmann and Brent Mydland were involved in video projects further explaining the bands' stance.



BRAZIL Transnational Subsoil

In the fascinating realm of the rich Brazilian subsoil, one group alone - the British Petroleum/Brascan association - holds the mining rights to 192,958 square kilometres of land, an area three times the size of Portugal or four-fifths that of the United Kingdom. Mining concessions granted to BP/Brascan account for 48.8% of the total awarded to all foreign economic groups in Brazil.



JOHNATHON LIVINGSTON On 'Renewable Resources'

"I no longer believe that there is in practice such a thing as a renewable resource. Once a thing is perceived as having some utility - any utility - and is thus perceived as a 'resource', its depletion is only a matter of time. I know of no wildlife that is being 'renewed' anywhere - not yellow birch or hemlock or anchovies or salmon or bowhead whales or anything else. 'Renewable resource' is a self contradictory incoherence, at least as applied to wildlife." John Livingston writing in "The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation".

USA The Pork Barrel Bank

At least 915 US firms IBM, Dresser Industries, Monsanto, Exxon, and Ingersoll Rand to name a few) in 47 states earned more than \$1.7 billion last year from World Bank projects, making it easy for Congress to say the bank's loans "create" jobs and "boost" exports. In reality, taxpayers pay for the whole kit and caboodle: the loans, exports, jobs and bureaucrats that make them happen. The money merely goes on a round trip to Rwanda or Zambia to make it look like something legitimate is going on.

Washington Times October 12, 1988

Patrick Anderson in Berlin

Outside the autonomous people are engaged in a pitched battle with the police monsters. Totally protected with flack suits, radio controlled helmets, guns, tear gas, shields and sticks, mobs of alien riot police encircle a crowd of people shouting "IMF Murder Meeting" and truncheon hundreds into the waiting mobile cages. Back at the Bank receptions, between glasses and business deals, the question is raised "what are they revolting about?" So I mumble something about AIDS and imperialism and head for the crowded streets. Last Sunday 80,000 people at the rally against the bank. Three simultaneous counter conferences last week attracted thousands of people to hear the bad news and organise for change. Pretty much every speech at the Bank's AGM mentioned environmental crisis mainly rainforest destruction. The burning of the Amazon has made more than a few heads shake, before reaching for the next martini. Latest stats; 1987: 21 million hectares in legal Amazon burn. This breaks down as; 8 million hectares of primary rainforest, ... million ha of secondary forest and savannah or 4% of the forests. If the rate of doubling every two years continues, this means; 1990 40 million ha, or 8%, 1991 80 million ha, or 16%, 1993 160 million ha, or 32%, 1995 200 million ha, or 40% - no Amazon forest left. 90% of the burning is for cattle ranching, heavily subsidised by the government.

WORLD ROUNDUP

AFRICA Deforestation And Poverty

"If you want to draw a map of absolute poverty in Africa, you will find it coincides with the areas that have been deforested", says Chuck Lankester, principal technical advisor to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Environmentalists and forestry experts decry the rapid loss of the world's tropical forests. On a worldwide scale, say many experts, this destruction exacerbates the trend toward global warming. And in developing countries, depletion of forests results in declining living standards.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, most natural forests have long since been cut down for timber, fuel wood, and to clear land. Some areas of Western and Central Africa, however, are still heavily forested. But the UNDP report on African forests lists some of the negative effects of deforestation:

* Since 1900 about 150 million hectares of African forests have become abandoned, submarginal land. * As forests disappear, the rural poor divert more income and time toward obtaining fuel wood. * When fuel wood is no longer available, animal waste is burned for fuel instead of being used for fertilizer. * Nutrition declines as people can no longer find, or afford, fuelwood for cooking and for boiling unclean water. * Dams and irrigation systems silt up as soil erodes. Ten African nations now have severe watershed problems. K.H.



NZ Look Mum, Clean Hands!

"Dear Mr. Brooks, I am sure you know that under the Malaysian Federal Constitution, forest land and its exploitation is the responsibility and right of the State Government. The Federal Government of which I am head has no right to interfere. You are wrong if you think giving the forests to the indigenous people will save the trees. The indigenous people practice slash and burn cultivation and vast tracts of forest have been completely obliterated by shifting slash and burn practice. Logging of selected mature trees allows the forests to regenerate quickly. But of course it will not sound noble to condemn the tribal people. It is much more romantic to fight for their rights against the Government. Yours sincerely, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia."

From ECO NEWSLETTER, New Zealand.

PNG Big Loss

Papua Nuigini Friends of the Earth have produced an exciting 28 page report: Forestry Issue 1988 which looks at the various issues emerging in their country - articles such as "Logging - a big loss for PNG", "Problems of Forest Development particularly Gogol Valley", "Friends of the Earth Planting Project in the Gogol Valley" and many others. Available from Friends of the Earth, PNG P.O. Box 4028 Boroko P.N.G. (please send a donation to cover printing and postage.)



Yeah.....and they're off. In the pinstripe jerseys and reinforced bowler hats, it's MYBROTHERSFATHERSSON Logging Co. of Penang (MLC) versus the Peaceful Penan People (PPP). First one to clear-fell to the horizon wins whatever's left. The last team of dozers has just disappeared over the first hill. What's this, the PPP are still encamped and not looking like they're in the race. They haven't burned, slashed or shifted since it began... what's up? One of them is pointing up at the sky through the leaves with a sign which reads "We won - the horizon's up there". Ed.

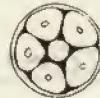


AUSTRALIA EARTH FIRST! PRODUCTIONS

John Seed and Dean Jefferys of the Rainforest Information Centre are presently planning a documentary video on Thailand and consequences of and alternatives to logging the rainforests. The video's concept originated with a request from the Thailand Project for Ecological Recovery, suggesting that this encouraging story of a people's conservation movement could be told to a wider audience. The video would also be helpful in their awareness campaign, to ensure that the present logging moratorium in Thailand stays firm. It will show how the real problem of rainforest destruction goes deeper than just stopping logging in your own country. The video will show how Thailand's situation may become similar to Australia's, where they become dependent on rainforest timbers imported from other countries unless realistic timber programmes are initiated. The video will show examples of the problems associated with exporting rainforest timbers in Sarawak, Malaysia and outline alternatives available to consumers to help preserve the world's remaining rainforests. A budget of \$10,000 has been estimated to complete the video and any donation (tax deductibility available) would be graciously accepted : Earth First Productions, C/O Rainforest Information Centre, PO Box 368, Lismore, NSW 2480.



Letters



WARSHALL BREEDLOVE - CONSULTANTS IN NATURAL COMMUNITIES
NTH AMERICAN FLORA AND FAUNA WATERSHEDS AND WASTE
RECYCLING AGRICULTURE AND LANDUSE PLANNING

Dear John, You have 1,500 copies each weighing 3.5 oz. That's just short of 330 pounds of paper per mailing. In general, pulp trees weigh about 250lbs, and produce about 125 lbs of paper. In short each issue of World Rainforest Report needs about 2.8 trees. This is, of course, rough as conversion depends on tree species, type of paper, etc. But, its close. Good luck on your reports and good luck to rainforests.

Peter Warshall.

GREETINGS FROM WEST GERMANY Sitting in a traffic jam north of Cologne, driving home from a 'back to the jungle' party with Heffa's friends, typing away on my high tech toy. This three lane road probably goes all the way across Europe; Denmark to Rome, burning up the world. Half the forests are dead in this part of the world, but everyone's driving to parties. News on the radio just said the East German government has acknowledged that acid rain is killing their forests (ten years too late). Their solution; "Now we are working on genetic engineering to create trees that can still live in the pollution." East and West, it's the same story, everyone will do anything - except stop the party. Well this is sounding like a pretty depressing letter, but that's where I am right now, stuck in a traffic jam, stuck in a culture which is destroying the life it survives on, me as much as anyone else. I've been wanting to write a family letter for a few weeks now, but have had a million other things to write. Doing lots of useful work; some good things are happening here and the political will is being created whereby the European Governments will act to help protect tropical forests, but only if they don't have to stop the party. There are rainforest actions happening all over the country. A group called "Burgers (citizens) against the Burger", do actions against McDonalds and Burger King for destroying the rainforest. I met with some of them who didn't seem that interested in the fact that Burger King had got out of Costa Rica and that nobody has been able to pin rainforest beef on McDonalds. They are correct of course, due to the fact that Europe imports massive amounts of soy beans and sorghum grown on rainforest soils to feed their cattle. I hate chain stores too and like their commitment to actions, so I've been encouraging them to get involved with the Penan actions. They will organise the protest inside the National headquarters of Mitsubishi (major timber importers from Sarawak) in Dusseldorf and have invited me to be there. The World Bank business was useful, I think, but exhausting. Walking the corridors of the Bank conference Centre, dressed in a suit and tie, like all the 5,000 bank and government thugs that filled the building, my mantra became "I'm a White Man". At some point after a few particularly useless meetings with Bankers, bored to extraction by the stories of the Amazon burning at a rate such that it will be gone in less than a decade, etc., I decided the most useful thing I could do for the rainforests would be to immolate myself on the steps of the Bank conference building... Foolishness overcome this strong intention and I'm left to suffer the consequences. The most invigorating part of Berlin was the fact that over 500 separate demonstrations, the largest with 80,000 people, took place during the World Bank/IMF meetings. The leftist groups had been preparing for the past year and did a good job of educating and organising themselves. The autonomous groups were also very active in Berlin, their positng being no compromise in the destruction of Imperialism, and their chant with could be heard throughout the city any night of the meetings was "IMF Murder meeting" Supposedly the autonomous groups were organising for the biggest, wildest demonstration on Thursday night, the last night before the Bank wank ended. A circular

cont. next page

letters cont.

was sent around inside the Bank meeting building, warning about the impending mayhem - on earlier nights riots had occurred with up to 150 people being arrested, cars set on fire, the windows of many banks smashed, and the Berlin riot police doing a great job in educating us all that this indeed is a police state. The foreign press who covered the demonstrations were so shocked at being beaten up and having their cameras smashed etc, and generally being treated like any other citizen in the protest that several reporters filed law suits against the police. Many of the poor bank delegates, who were just doing their jobs, had fear stuck into their hearts by this announcement and left Berlin one day early. As it happened the autonomies decided that the fear they had stirred up was as good as the real thing, so they all went home. So, unfortunately the Bank wasn't destroyed and continues in its greedy way to liquidate peoples and ecosystems for its own perverse ends. Teddy Goldsmith told me wistfully about those days in the early '80s when Reagan and Maggie were informed that the World Bank was a communist plot and almost pulled out. "With a bit of help they might have destroyed the Bank", he sighed. Despite the incessant grey skies, autumn is a beautiful time of year here. Trees flaming bright before they rest up, everything falling back to earth, rich smells of leaves and damp soil. Where I've been staying the backyard stretches to forests and is full of apples and chestnut trees. Every day a new carpet of fruit and nuts. I am glad I came back to Germany, it is important for me to see Heffa, and the rainforest work is more important than I can imagine. I'm happy to be trying to protect some of the diversity of our Earth, to be working to turn the great beast away from the abyss....much love PATRICK.



Earth Garden PO Box 188, Moreland, Victoria 3058 Australia

We gave our first tree tax to RIC, but we'll administer future ones ourselves. Glad you like that idea. So far, we've donated one to Men of the trees in WA, one to the ATCV in Victoria, and one to the Tassie branch of the TWS to help in its current struggle to save the not-so-glamorous Southern and Lemonthyme forests.



Pagans against Nukes Blaenberem Mynyddcerrig Llanelli Dyfed, Cymru SA15 5BL Wales

What chance of raising funds to buy up tracts of rainforest and give them back to the tribes who rightfully inhabit them?





BRAZIL



The destruction of the world's greatest rainforest the Amazon, continues at an alarming rate. "Fires, deforestation, huge agricultural projects, gold mines and predatory developments are destroying our flora and fauna. We must contain the predatory actions of man". With these words Brazil's President Jose Sarney announced a series of measures aimed at slowing the destruction. In announcing this drastic reversal of the policy of the last two decades, the government was apparently responding to mounting pressure from scientists, environmentalists and international lending agencies. However, given the enormous pressure to exploit the Amazon, it remains to be seen whether the measures will have much impact. The Government's powers are minimal; fat bribes persuade many officials to turn a blind eye. The forest's guardian, the Forestry Institute, is under-staffed, and the armed forces, which ruled Brazil for twenty one years until 1985, want the Amazon settled for security reasons.

THE EXTENT OF THE DESTRUCTION.

Philip Fearnside, an American ecologist based in Manaus, predicts that 2.7 million hectares (an area the size of Belgium) will be destroyed this year. Smoke from burning rainforest has enshrouded the region's major cities and closed airports in five Brazilian states. In 1980, Brazil was responsible for 20% of the planet's carbon emissions from tropical deforestation. Since then, the destruction has increased dramatically, and many scientists are concerned about the effect of the resultant release of carbon dioxide and other gases on the ozone layer as well as on global temperatures. One tenth of the global production of carbon dioxide has been attributed to the Amazon fires.

MORE EFFICIENT EXPLOITATION ?

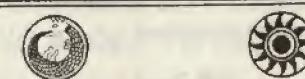
Because rainforest soils are deficient in crop producing nutrients farmers have to use slash and burn techniques to continually open up more land.

Walter Bowen, a US agronomist in Manaus, is experimenting with ways to extend the length of time the Amazon Basin's delicate soil can produce yields before being depleted. "Correct use of lime and fertilizers could increase the length of time a plot of land provides yields from three to five years", claims Mr Bowen, this would reduce the devastation by 40%.

The government has created reserves to prevent outsiders from destroying areas where rubber tappers live and work, thus encouraging utilisation of the forests resources without destroying the forest.

The International Tropical Timber Organisation has created a \$3 million program in Acre state to study ways in which the Amazon can be logged while keeping the forest "intact". While the type of harvesting likely to be advocated by the proponents of such a study would probably be preferable to current practices, it remains a commonly held view among environmentalists that sustainable harvesting of rainforests is a myth and that there are no examples of successful sustained logging in the tropics.

Wim Groenveld, a tropical scientist in Porto Velho, Rondonia, believes that such proposals offer the forest its only hope. "You can't stop the deforestation" he says, "but you can minimise its impact and try to reduce the area being deforested". "Previously, we just wanted the Amazon to be set aside. But with the government confronted with not being able to leave the forests intact, we've begun focusing on rational ways to use the already occupied forest," says Anthony Anderson, chief of the botany division of the Emilio Goeldi Museum in Belem.



YANOMAMI PROPOSALS ARE "GENOCIDAL"

In August, the Brazilian authorities announced the demarcation of the lands of the Yanomami Indians. However, there is no doubt that if enacted, the proposals will actually destroy the Indian group. Less than 30% of the Indian territory is included, divided into 19 separate zones. This is similar to a 1978 Government project which prompted a world outcry in support of the Indians. Most of the Indian area will be designated as a "national park" and two "national forests". The Indians will be denied proper land rights there. By law the 'forests' will be open for economic development in spite of the fact that the authorities are claiming they are intended for conservation.

Gold prospecting, which is already a grave threat to the Indians with 20,000 miners in place, will now become legal over much of the Indian area. So will mining for other minerals as well as timber extraction.

Indians are already dying from the diseases brought by the miners. In the past two months in the lower Mujacai area alone 9 Indians died. Earlier this year, in the Sierra do Parima, 50% of a community on the Budu U river was wiped out. Further deaths are reported near the Couto de Magalhaes river, around the community of Uata U. There is a high risk of the spread of measles, tuberculosis and venereal diseases which are carried by the miners.

The proposals may actually be designed to eliminate the Indians, as the Brazilian National Security Council, under the so called "National Corridor" project, wants to promote major development along the northern frontier of Brazil in the Yanomami area. The 19 separate areas have been called "concentration camps" by the Roman Catholic missionary organisation in Brazil which supports Indian rights, and which has accused the Government of "lying" over the proposals which it describes as 'genocidal'. Moreover, the authorities' announcement is in direct contradiction of an article in the new Brazilian constitution which guarantees Indian land rights.

BACKGROUND:

The Yanomami were one of the largest Amazonian Indian groups whose way of life was still largely unchanged by contact with outsiders. They live in northern Brazil and southern Venezuela and number 10,000 in Brazil and at least as many in Venezuela. Most of them still lived in balance with their environment; their hunting, fishing and shifting cultivation way of life provided all their needs. Survival International and others have been trying to protect their land for twenty years. In 1978/79 Government plans to split the territory were abandoned in a storm of international protest. There have been armed confrontations between Indians and miners since 1976 and several Indian communities have been wiped out by diseases introduced by miners and roadbuilders.

ACTION

You are urged to send a courteous airmail letter or postcard or telex to the President of Brazil as soon as possible. Exmo Jose Sarney, Presidente da Republica Palacio do Planalto 70.160 Brasilia DF BRAZIL Telex 611451 The following points are important: # The proposals to create separate pockets of Yanomami land will destroy the Indian group if they go ahead. # Instead, a single Yanomami Park covering the land used by the Indians should be created. # The miners in the area should be evicted. Survival International



BRAZIL'S STRONG-ARM TACTICS FAN INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION TO DAMS

An attempt by the Brazilian government to silence critics of its plans for developing the Amazon has back-fired. By mishandling the arrest of two Amazonian Indians and an American anthropologist who travelled to Washington to lobby against a series of huge dams that would flood the Indians' homelands, the government has stirred up opposition to its plans.

Darrel Posey, the anthropologist, who has lived with the Kayapo tribe in central Brazil for 12 years was arrested under a law forbidding foreigners from interfering in Brazil's internal affairs and the two Indians were charged with aiding him in his crime. They say in their defense that it was Posey who was aiding and abetting them not the other way around.

Directors of the World Bank, which may be lending Brazil \$500 million for the project, backed the case of the Indians. "It was definitely very helpful to talk with them" said Paul Arlman, the executive director of the bank for the Netherlands, Cyprus, Israel, Romania and Yugoslavia. Survival International and a host of other development, human rights and environmental organisations world wide have been appealing to the World Bank and to the national governments who fund it not to approve the loan.

On the day of the arraignment, Kube-i, one of the arrested Indians, appeared at the courthouse in full ceremonial dress, accompanied by 400 Kayapo warriors. The judge refused to allow him into the courthouse until he "dressed in a shirt and pants" Kube-i refused, saying "this is how we dress for great solemnities".

Embarrassed by publicity the case attracted, the government offered to drop the charges against the In-

dians. They refused the offer, using the publicity to strengthen opposition to the project. In an unprecedented display of unity, 3,500 Indians from 28 tribes held a 5 day meeting in January and built a symbolic settlement at the site of the dam to prevent its construction.

Brazilian officials have warned Kube-i and Payakan not to seek support abroad but in November they went on a month-long journey to publicise their case in Europe and North America.



BRAZILIAN LOGGING CURBS "NOT WORKING"

Environmentalists and government officials say Brazil is still exporting tropical hardwoods despite the recently imposed Presidential moratorium which was part of a governmental package of measures to protect the environment particularly the rainforests. The package was in response to international uproar at a sharp increase in the clearing of the Amazon. Professor Philip Fearnside of the Institute of Amazon Studies pointed out that log exports have always been banned unless they were cut from areas to be flooded by hydro-electric schemes. The Professor said companies were "laundering" their exports by claiming logs came from dam sites.

Mr Ademar Natsunga, head of the enforcement division at the Forestry Development Institute admitted that policing was weak. "We just do not have enough people" he explained.

JAPAN'S ROLE.

The World Wide Fund for Nature has called on Japan, the world's biggest importer of tropical timber "to halt its new log imports from Brazil which began this month."

A WWF campaigns officer speaking at the 5th council meeting of the International Tropical Timber Organisation in Yokohama in November said a sudden influx of Brazilian logs to Japan "could seriously jeopardise attempts to improve forest management practices and conservation policies in South East Asia and open the floodgates of Japanese trade in Amazonian timber."

A DEATH IN THE AMAZON JUNGLE TURNS THE HEAT ON SARNEY

In every dry season since the mid 1970's, great tracts of land have been torched by Brazilian settlers pushing back the frontiers of the world's largest rainforest. To the large and growing worldwide criticism of the destruction Brazil has had a standard reply: the Amazon is the property of Brazil and it is the right of Brazil alone to decide what to do with it.

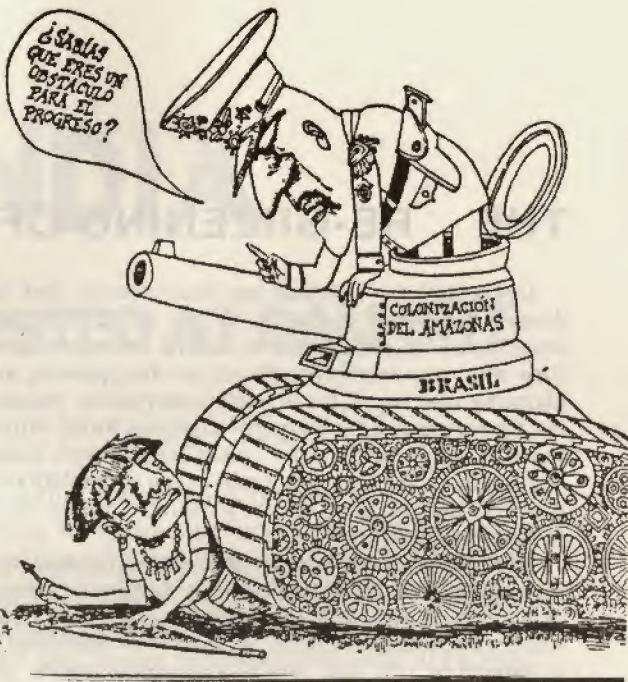
The Greenhouse effect has made such a stand less tenable. Soft loans from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank for new roads and hydroelectric dams were suspended pending further study of Brazil's treatment of the environment. For all that, it has taken a murder to make the Brazilian Government realise how interested outsiders are.

On December 23 a peasant organiser and ecologist, Francisco "Chico" Mendes was shot dead outside his home in Xapuri in western Brazil.

Mr Mendes was internationally recognised for his fight to protect the western frontier state of Acre against deforestation which among other things was destroying the livelihood of freelance rubber tappers like himself.

His murder became a symbol of the battle to save the Amazon. The police arrested two land owning brothers and their father, Darci Alves da Silva, who said he killed Mendes because he was preventing his family from expanding its ranch.

Prior to his death Francisco Mendes left the following note: "I want no flowers in my burial for I know they will be plucked out of the forest. I only want my murder to end the impunity of the gunmen protected by the Acre police who since 1975 have killed more than 50 persons like me, rubbertapper leaders, defending Amazonia and proving that it is possible to progress without destruction...." -Christian Science Monitor



STING ADDED TO PROTEST

English rock star Sting, while in Sao Paulo last October for an Amnesty International human rights concert added to the growing international protest against the clearing of the world's greatest rainforest and the plight of its Indian inhabitants. He challenged the Brazilian Government to arrest him for doing so. "If they want to arrest me in front of 25,000 Brazilians tomorrow, they can," said Sting. He criticised the burning of the forest and the pollution of the area's rivers. (Northern Star 13/10/88)

'BACKDOOR' ROAD TO AMAZON SETS OFF ECOLOGY ALARM

Three American Senators made a disturbing discovery in the Amazon rainforest in January. They found preparations for a paved road to be built from the Western Brazilian province of Acre to Pucallpa in Peru, thence over the Andes to Lima. The bulldozers are ready to start as soon as the dry season opens in April. Who, asked the senators - Tim Wirth, Albert Gore and John Heinz - is to pay for this road, which will open a back door into the Amazon? Japanese banks, came the reply.

The governor of Acre, where Chico Mendez was murdered, in December had just returned from a visit to Tokyo to seal the contracts. He proudly showed the senators a map showing the road's significance. The section in Brazil would be quite short, through a district with no road at all, to connect with the long trans-Andean highway in Peru. It would allow the export of Brazil nuts, timber and other products to Japan, the short way, via Lima.

Dr Tom Lovejoy of Washington's Smithsonian Institution, who was with the senators, believes the road would be "the beginning of the end" for the Amazon. This is not just because roads bring land hungry settlers who burn the trees but because, almost for the first time, it would open the western Amazon to commerce. Japan takes 40 percent of all the tropical logs sold on the world market. Its main suppliers have been south-east Asian nations. Indonesia and Malaysia have banned the export of logs, planning to capture more of the value by sawing them into timber at home.

So Japanese industry is looking for alternative sources. The back door of the Amazon is temptingly close.

Up to now less than 5 per cent of the damage done to the amazon has been done by logging.

The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank both refused to pay for the Acre-to-Peru road, under their new policy of not helping projects that damage the rainforest. One study in Peru found that the value of the products of a natural forest exploited sustainably for its fruit rubber and timber exceeded threefold the value of beef that the land could produce as pasture.

The US is worried that Japanese initiatives that are not linked to protection of the environment will lessen pressure from developed nations for Brazil to take conservation issues seriously.

The Australian, Feb 15 '89

THE RE-GREENING OF VIETNAM.

Devastated by war, and one of the poorest and most densely populated countries in the world, Vietnam is determined to rehabilitate its natural environment. At a time when the earth's woodlands are disappearing at an alarming rate, one of the poorest countries has pioneered the first successful replanting of a tropical forest. After 12 years of experimentation - often fraught with failure - Vietnamese scientists have finally begun to rehabilitate the country's war ravaged forests, devastated during 30 years of uninterrupted war.

Vietnam's main testing ground for tropical forest replanting is some 100 kilometers northeast of Ho Chi Minh City on the edge of a 30,000 hectare tract of land. Once a tropical moist forest the area was defoliated and napalmed by US and South Vietnamese troops. As a result three quarters of the trees died and the landscape is now reduced to kilometers of dusty bombed out hillside and vast stretches of useless savannah.

Shortly after the war ended in 1975, scientists tried replanting several species of indigenous trees but the young saplings were burnt in grass fires in the dry season. To protect the trees from the tropical sun the scientists established a forest cover of exotic trees. When these trees gained sufficient height, they planted several species of dipterocarpus, and were jubilant to discover that after more than a decade of planting trials, several species finally survived.

Today, 300 hectares of acacia and eucalyptus trees give shelter to four different species of dipterocarpus. The experiment offers great promise to the rest of the world in replanting tropical forests, but it also demonstrates how difficult and time-consuming the rehabilitation of tropical forests is. It has taken the Vietnamese over a decade to bring back a few species where there had been thousands. Moreover the recovering patch of green is only one per cent of the original forest.

Scientists believe it will take decades for other plant species to regenerate and it is doubtful whether the large mammals that once inhabited the forest will ever return. More forest has been lost since the war ended than during it. Postwar reconstruction, firewood collection, slash and burn agriculture have meant that Vietnam loses about 200,000 hectares of forest each year. Some 40% of the country is now considered wasteland.

However in 1987, on a shoestring budget, about 500 million trees were planted, representing 160,000 hectares. Compared to a country such as Costa Rica, which receives millions of dollars in aid a year and plants only 7,000 hectares of trees a year, Vietnam's efforts are probably the most cost-effective in the world.

According to Vo Quy, dean of biology of the University of Hanoi, "Vietnam's goal is to plant 200,000 hectares of trees this year and reach 300,000 as soon as possible. The re-greening effort is the biggest challenge facing the country since reunification." Vo Quy and a team of scientists have drafted a national plan of recovery to put the country on a firm ecological footing. The plan, based on the principles of the World Conservation Strategy launched in 1980, calls for two immediate measures: large

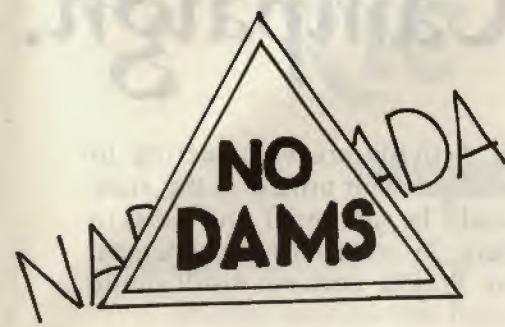
scale family planning and massive reforestation. Vietnam's plan was drawn up faster than those of any of the 30 nations that have outlined similar strategies for environmental recovery.

Less than three years after the drafting of the strategy, farmers are filling in 25 million bomb craters. All along the country's highways trees have been planted. Rusting metal strewn over the land after the war is collected and taken to factories and made into furniture, fencing, and so on.

Vietnam's Ministry of Forestry has worked out plans for the next 10 years to reforest 1.5 million hectares of barren hills and rehabilitate more than 200,000 hectares of degraded forest. Every school child must plant and maintain trees. In 1985 and 1986 students planted 52 million trees and built 860,000 square meters of tree nurseries. "We had to act quickly" explained Vo Quy. "Unless we can bring the country's forest cover back up to 50% from a record low of 21%, Vietnam will find itself in the midst of an environmental crisis."

Vietnam has made remarkable progress in tree-planting, but its environmental recovery has been hindered by lack of funds. A number of governments have said they will give no further aid to Vietnam after 1990 unless it withdraws its troops from Kampuchea. General Giap, former Commander-in-Chief of Vietnam's armed forces, and now the country's highest ranking environmentalist recognises his country needs outside help, but he is hopeful. He says The National Conservation Strategy "is an alarmist document, and rightly so, but it is not pessimistic. The grave environmental problems can be solved. The resource base can be recovered and the Vietnamese people do have the energy, discipline and resourcefulness to beat these problems just as they have successfully faced the tasks of liberation and re-unification."





INDIA

18 ARRESTED AT DAM SITE

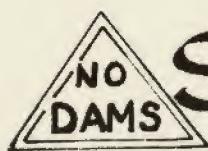
by Carol Sherman

As opposition mounts against the construction of the World Bank funded Sardar Sarovar dam in Gujarat, the State and Federal governments of India are facing yet another wave of popular unrest against a critical ecological and social issue. With the recent arrests at the dam site which included renowned lawyer and civil rights champion Girish Patel and the detention of Medha Patkar, leading activist and organizer against the Sardar Sarovar Project, the campaign is set to increase pressure on the power mongers who seek to expand their economic base at any cost. Increased knowledge through the communities about the project, coupled with strong urban based support, has resulted in decisive action being taken. The Narmada Valley Project is now receiving more national and international attention.

This project is the largest single river scheme ever planned in India. It is designed to construct 3,200 major and minor dams along the river over a 100 year period. The whole scheme if implemented would uproot over a million people, (many of these tribals) submerge 350,000 ha of forest lands, 200,000 ha of cultivable land whilst causing irreversible environmental chaos. Sardar Sarovar, one of the biggest dams in this project is already under construction receiving a loan of US \$300 million from the World Bank. As evidence emerges as to the abysmal failure of the governments ability to implement resettlement and ensure environmental protection, the Bank is now forced to send a team to review the situation. During my recent trip to India, I joined 60 others in a week long march through villages of 3 states to be affected by the Sardar Sarovar dam. From the warm and enthusiastic reception we always received, it was clear that the time had come for the people to take a stand. After years of being misinformed, misled and offered false promises, many are now saying that they will drown in their homes rather than leave their village. Tribals, villagers and activists are now working together to stop the project. A mass rally was held at the dam site on 30 January, to protest against the implementation of the Official Secrets Act in the area, thus depriving the citizens of their civil rights. 18 were arrested on that day, whilst others were detained in support actions.

February 22nd is the day when more than 5,000 persons from the affected areas in Madhya Pradesh and the 12 villages around the dam site, will court arrest in protests against the Sardar Sarovar. In support of this action, a protest is being organized on the same day at the Indian Consulate in Sydney to highlight the issue. Non cooperation is already taking place. Surveyors, irrigation department officials, personnel and forestry department officers are finding that the villagers and tribals are not willing to communicate with them, while metal posters of protest against the dam are popping up in all affected areas. *cont.*





Support this Campaign.

Funds are urgently needed to support this campaign. Activists are volunteering to stay in villages for 6 month periods to help the tribals formulate their protest to the state and federal governments. At \$40 per month, a worker could be sponsored and assist in cases such as in the Dhule district, Madhya Pradesh, where 25 tribals have challenged the Land Acquisition Act, claiming that the Sardar Sarovar Project does not fulfill aiding the public.

On environmental, economic and social levels, this project is a failure. Rising costs are crippling state coffers. Hazards of major dams such as water-logging, loss of fertile soil, salinization, siltation and loss of forests and endemic species have not been sufficiently addressed. While the U.S has called a halt to major dam construction and Europe is virtually following suit, India seems bent on degrading her life support systems while widening the gap between rich and poor.

Please write immediately to the World Bank, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, and the Narmada Development Authority.

Letters may be addressed to:

Mr Amarsingh Choudhary,
Chief Minister
Government of Gujarat,
GANDINAGAR
GUJARAT. INDIA

Chairman Narmada Development Authority,
South Block,
New Delhi.
INDIA.

Mr Qureshi,
Senior Vice President of the World Bank,
1818 H St,
Washington D.C 20433
U.S.A.

Please direct tax deductible donations to the
Australian Conservation Foundation
672B, Glenferrie Rd,
Hawthorn, Victoria, 3122, stating your preference that this be directed to the Narmada
River Campaign via the Rainforest Information Centre.



R.I.C in INDIA

Project Arunachala.

Having just returned from a three month environmental tour in India, I am happy to be able to share the news of R.I.C's latest commitment in Asia. Volunteers will assist in the reforestation of Arunachala sacred hill, regarded by many as Lord Shiva himself. Situated in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, this place tidy is visited by Indian and overseas devotees on pilgrimages. After spending several weeks viewing the area and talking with people already working on the greening of the district, we have collectively devised the initial stages for the project.

There are many obstacles to overcome in any reforestation programme in India, however it seems that with a well co-ordinated plan, energy and finances, the vision of a once-again forested hill can be realized. This area, once known for its forests and varied ecosystems, was home for leopards, tigers and bears. Over the last hundred years it has been raped. With the population explosion in Tiruvannamalai, the hill and surrounding area has been reduced to scantily covered rock, devoid of substantial vegetation. Rains have been failing with monotonous regularity, while the water table continues to fall drastically. Locals carrying headloads of firewood are to be seen descending the hill having scavenged from what trees have been planted by the Forest Department. Each year, the whole hill is set alight after harvesting the long grasses which are used as a raw material for roof thatching. Grazing is also apparent to a small extent. However, these activities are carried out by only a small minority of the population who otherwise are fully supportive of a project to green Arunachala.

This challenging project is ready to get underway. We have just sent \$1300 over to pay for a six-month study into the illegal usage of the hill. Volunteers and workers will investigate who is exploiting the hill and why. They will then work out viable alternatives for the poor section of the community who depend on the natural resources for their survival. At the same time, seed collection and identification will proceed, while local liaisoning in the community to gain support will continue.

Help can be used immediately. Anyone wishing to get involved with this project would be welcome. Specific land and water management skills would be of great use. Volunteers who could organize and assist in co-ordination for the project would be great support to the few dedicated souls who are tirelessly working for this vision to become a reality. Funds are urgently required to generate local employment and offer alternatives for those who are at present forced to destroy the land. At approximately \$50 per month, a job could be created which will lay the foundations for so much change. Anyone wishing further information please contact the R.I.C.



by Carol Sherman.

SUMATRA

PULP AND RAYON FRAY ON

About 300 North Sumatran farmers, blaming a pulp and rayon factory for a shortage of water, tried to attack the company office in Porsea. However local authorities cooled down the angry villagers who then cancelled their planned protest. Despite an order from the local government, the company PTI Int, Indorayan U Tema (PTIU) continues to fell trees in its 86,000 hectare forest concession around Poresa village in the famous Lake Toba area.

The farmers could not plant their 3,000 hectares of paddy fields due to the severe water shortage, despite the current rainy season. They pointed out that the Bach Kisat river had dried up. The river had never dried up before even in the dry season.

The Simalungun Regent, asked the central government to stop the deforestation, but the Forestry Minister Hasyrul Harcehep said the logging did not endanger local river basins. He said the company had reforested areas it logged with "good enough" results. Wide-leaved pine trees or eucalyptus are used in the reforestation.

A hearing planned for Nov. 30 1988 to discuss the matter in the central government House of Representatives was cancelled under controversial circumstances and a House member who was an outspoken opponent of the company's actions claimed he had been terrorised.

Following strong protest by farmers, the North Sumatra Governor has threatened to sue the company for any environmental destruction it causes.

Concern has also been expressed by Buttu R Hutapea, a North Sumatra provincial House member, that the logging will cause flooding in river basins. He said PTIU has logged at least 3,500 hectares of pine forest causing frequent major flooding.

Government officials have alleged that illegal tree felling has occurred, and that toxic wastes were deliberately released from a faulty waste collection lagoon at the factory into the Asahan river. It was reported on Nov. 14 that the government, under public pressure, had formed a team to investigate the extent of the water pollution.

The Regent of Simalungun has urged the company to stop logging because it could endanger an irrigation project currently undergoing renovations at a cost of Rp175 billion. The government is being assisted in the project by the World Bank.

Another problem associated with the plant is air pollution caused by the processing of sulphuric acid. It has sometimes spread as far as Lake Toba, 30km away. Sukamto Tanoto, president of PTIU has assured the North Sumatran governor that his factory will not dangerously pollute the environment..

Meanwhile, complaints about deforestation have occurred in many areas in Indonesia recently. In Sept. 1988, villagers living around a mountain in Sukabumi regency, West Java strongly protested a plan by the Perhutani state-run forestry company to turn a conservation area into an industrial timber estate. They fear that deforestation will affect the watershed for the rivers flowing through their villages.

Source, the Jakarta Post Sept, Oct. & Nov. 1988.



ECUADOR UPDATE

A project to plant a vast buffer zone of perennial fruit orchards and mixed native species of timber around the Awa people's pristine rainforest on the Ecuador - Columbian border, was chronicled in World Rainforest Report No. 11, in which one of the architects of the project, Doug Ferguson, outlined plans to establish nurseries to provide literally millions of trees for the project.

Doug reported then that in Ecuador, land reform laws are such that any "unproductive" land is available for colonisation, so that designs for the buffer zone had to have inbuilt productivity in the species chosen. The trees will be planted in a 150-mile long cleared area around the 130 000 ha. Ethnic Forest Reserve.

Doug describes his venture as "what could be a model rainforest and tribal population protection attempt". He is working in Ecuador as a representative of the Rainforest Information Centre, Australia, at the invitation of U.T.E.P.A. (Unidad Técnica Ecuatorino Plan Awa), and the Awa Federation of Ecuador. The project, in which he is working with another Australian, Christopher Holt, is being supported internationally by Cultural Survival, U.S. as well as by the Rainforest Information Centre.

To establish the necessary tropical fruit tree nurseries to plant on the "manga" or cleared strip around the forest reserve, seed has been collected locally and from around the world. The aim is to bring a sustainable means of agriculture and forestry to the region, and to make this the first step in the national environmental education plan of Ecuador.

"This would be a complete process of agriculture, from guarding the genetic resource to the harvest," Doug said.

"It is a great step forward from the current chemical-based methods being taught here (in Ecuador) and everywhere. Those methods will destroy the land, the water and the culture as they have done in so many places."

Many of the nurseries already established are in the vicinity of schools and two in particular are in the grounds of agricultural colleges at Chical and San Lorenzo. One of Doug's recommendations is that there be a seminar on environmental education to prepare the teachers and community leaders of the region for their participation not only in the manga-planting project, but importantly, in the education campaign that will be an intrinsic part of it.

Students from San Lorenzo are being assigned to study and make reports on the growth and development of the species new to the zone, as the first step in launching the education focus of the work. The long-term aim, says Doug, is to help the local Ministries of Education and Agriculture to establish the on-the-ground network of Ecuadorians to continue the work.

A local youth from Chical, Juan Victor Revelo Cantincuz, has been employed on the local minimum wage to be trained in the work of seed collection, nursery care and planting.

"I believe that someone employed as he is on a Government contract for this task is a precedent," Doug said. "This is only one small part of my work here, and is specifically what I want funding for, as the money to pay him has bitten deeply into my funds."



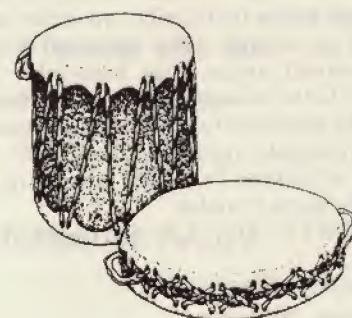
The main harvest season is now on in Ecuador; it goes from January to April. During that time Doug and Christopher and the helpers will establish three large-scale nurseries in what Doug describes as "the first basic steps in sustainable agriculture since the colonisation process began".

Each step of the project is being minutely chronicled to provide a baseline of sustainable agricultural data to the Ministries of Agriculture and Education.

So far Doug and Christopher have used \$35 000 of their own funds to set up the Ecuador project. They have had assistance from the Rainforest Information Centre and sporadically from organisations and individuals ideologically attuned to what they are doing.

Further funding assistance is urgently needed to develop the project and especially to employ more young workers with a sound local knowledge, who ultimately will be the ones that take over the project and keep it happening entirely with local expertise. As Doug says: "Funds for ecologically sound projects are limited". Yet enormous resources exist in the world, and it is limited. Yet enormous resources exist in the world, and it is long past time that wealthier organisations and individuals stopped paying lip service to fashionable concerns about environmental degradation and its potential to destroy even more of the planet; that potential will be realised all the sooner unless funds are urgently diverted to projects such as Doug's in Ecuador.

Jennie Dell.



ECUADOR



RAINFOREST ACTION ALERT

In 1979 the Ecuadorian national government established the Yasuni National Park, a 697,730 hectare tropical forest and wetlands reserve. Inside the park reside the Warani Indians, the last uncontacted indigenous people of Ecuador. This next year could bring the eventual destruction and colonisation of this reserve, and the displacement of the Waorani Indians. CEPE, an Ecuadorian oil corporation, under \$80 million dollar loan from the World Bank, plans to construct a \$22 million dollar road through a large section of this reserve. The road would serve as a tool to construct an oil pipeline across Ecuador.

It would also allow infiltration into the forest by landless farmers, ranchers and land speculator, bringing the eventual destruction of the reserve. This pipeline could easily be constructed by air, as many others through Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru have been. Construction by air would save the preserve from destruction and allow the Waorani Indians to keep their land.

CEPE will construct this road unless it can be convinced that the economic, ecological, and social costs of the road will be far greater than the slightly higher costs to build by air. Send letters to CEPE IMMEDIATELY, and help save the Yasuni Rainforest.

Send letters to:

Ing. Jaime Sanchez, Gerente and
Ing. Wilson Pastor,
Jefe de Concesiones
Corporation Estatal Petrolera Ecuatoriana
CEPE, Edificio El Rocio
Alpallana y 6 de Diciembre
Quito, Ecuador

Write to the President of Ecuador congratulating him on the efforts his government has made with the Awa Indians (the government recently supported the creation of what almost amounts to a sovereign land area for the Awa, who live on the frontier between Ecuador and Colombia), and asking that similar attention be given to restoration of the original land rights of the Huaorani. The letters should express some knowledge of the importance of oil to the economy of Ecuador, and at the same time call for the president to institute a new standard of social and environmental regulations for CEPE. Also point out the value of tourism if the park is protected.

Dr. Rodrigo Borja Cevallos
PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA DEL
ECUADOR
Presidencia de la Republica
Carcia Moreno 1043
Quito, Ecuador

FOREST CONSUMPTION IN SOUTH KALIMANTAN

The following information about Kalimantan and Irian Jaya comes from "INSIDE INDONESIA", a quarterly magazine (subscription A\$15 for 4 issues) published by the Indonesian Resources and Information Programme, P.O. Box 190, Northcote 3070, AUSTRALIA. This magazine is highly recommended having a wealth of information on politics, human rights, social conditions, economy, environment, development and culture in Indonesia.

KODECO (Korean Development Company) has a 450 000 ha. logging concession in South Kalimantan for the next 20 years. Some areas earmarked for transmigration are clearfelled whilst in other areas a 50 cm minimum diameter is supposed to keep the exploitation sustainable. However use of heavy equipment causes compaction of soil, damages surrounding trees and it seems unlikely that regrowth will occur fast enough for sustainability. No check is made or available on valuable species (meranti, keruing, ironwood) regeneration.

The picture is made bleaker by the provincial planning agency suggestions to halve the present amount of forest - clear felling on all but the steepest land - for mining, agriculture and settlement. Proposed planting of Eucalypt and Acacia trees and improving the transport facilities will seriously threaten the indigenous tribal Dayaks, who have already been severely affected by logging.



Costa Rica Debt-for-Nature Trade Due to Protect Land

From Reuters

WASHINGTON—Conservationists have made their largest single debt-for-nature swap, buying \$5.6 million in discounted debt for \$784,000 to help protect over 355,000 acres in Costa Rica, an environmental group said Wednesday.

The Nature Conservancy, an international land conservation group, said it purchased the debt from American Express Bank in the fifth debt-for-nature transaction and the one with the largest face value so far.

"The over \$3 million generated by the debt swap transaction will fund park protection, conservation training, educational programs, biological inventories and land acquisitions variously at nine conservation projects throughout the country," the group said.

The debt will be converted to Costa Rican currency bonds valued at \$1.7 million. The bonds, paying an average yearly interest of 25% over five years, are expected to generate more than \$3 million, the Nature Conservancy said.

The World Wildlife Fund made the previous biggest swap, valued at \$5.4 million in March, 1988, also in Costa Rica.

Costa Rica is experiencing the highest deforestation rate, outside of its parks, of any country in the Western Hemisphere.

The project was initiated by the Costa Rican National Parks Foundation, a private organization, and authorized by the Costa Rican Natural Resources Ministry and the Central Bank.

Merchandise

BUY FROM US AND HELP SAVE THE
EARTH'S RAINFORESTS.

Shirts & Scarves

T-SHIRTS AND SINGLETS; Each image is on a spectacular rectangle of rainbow colours on a white tee shirt. "Earth First" "Peace Harmony Ecology" "We're on a mission from Gaia".

PLUS TWO NEW DESIGNS A beautiful line drawing of a Penan in the Sarawak Rainforest by Dailan Pugh, covering the whole front area of a coloured T shirt (Green, orange, purple and pink). A powerful print of a gathering of animals meeting to discuss there plight, by Crystal 'A council of all beings'. (black on white and colour T shirts).

Also we've had 2 DAYS OF FINE WEATHER and hence have a good stock of Rainbow Scarves at \$5.00.



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All the above available from The Rainforest Information Centre
(a non-profit organisation) P.O. Box 368

LISMORE NSW 2480

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- You've seen the movie, now read the book! \$30-00 plus postage

Natives of Sarawak - \$15-00

Ecodefence - \$15-00

Thinking like a mountain by John Seed & Friends - \$15.

Australian Non-buyers Guide - 2nd Edition - \$6-00.

New Book

Logging against the natives of Sarawak, 1989.

INSAN, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. 93 pages in paperback, available from the Rainforest Information Centre for \$5.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

The four respected contributors to this volume address different aspects of the logging of the rainforests in Sarawak and its effects on the indigenous populations. The writers do not concentrate on ecological and anthropological approaches to the subject but treat various socio-political and economic questions.

The first part is a detailed case study of logging activities in Belaga. The Sarawak Study Group looks into the business arrangement made by loggers, the response by the longhouse communities, and the social and economic effects of logging upon the people in these communities.

Jejakamar Devaraj, a medical practitioner, illustrates the prevalence of serious, and often fatal, accidents in the logging industry and, with case studies, examines the workers' compensation scheme in force, highlighting its inadequacies.

The Malaysia government's argument that deforestation is attributable to the natives' traditional methods of shifting cultivation, rather than to logging, is exploded by S.C. Chin, who asserts that these traditional methods are ecologically sound. He stresses the permanently destructive effects of logging.

The book is complemented by stunning black and white photographs of logging operations and of the natives. This publication is a refreshingly readable, yet detailed and current account of issues central to the Penans' battle to protect their traditional lands. It is recommended to anyone interested in this struggle.

The R.I.C. waltz

Changes are afoot at the RIC. John Seed will be spending most of this year abroad - 6 months in Europe, UK and North America raising awareness for the rainforests with roadshows, film screenings and lectures as well as conducting Council Of All Beings workshops. Patrick Anderson will be spending most of his time working for the rainforests from Camberra. Ian Peter will be concentrating on the formation of the Pegasus computer network (see story **below**)

Back on the homefront, the new co-ordinators of the RIC are Francesca D'Espinay, Mara J and Julie - WELCOME! Pedro co-ordinates the RAGS and with John Rev edits WRR. Many thanks to Nodibullfrog, Sue, Conrad, Anja, Jed, Renee, Anne, George and the rest of our volunteers who keep RIC rolling along.



Ian Peter, who co-founded the Rainforest Information Centre in Lismore with John Seed, and who has been editing World Rainforest Report since its second issue back in 1984, has now stepped back from his central role in RIC to devote his time to the development of global computer networking.

Ian regards this as an extension of the sort of work he has concentrated on at RIC, and sees that the benefits of computer communications we have enjoyed here can be of use to many groups.

Ian is working on development of an Australian node to connect to the global computer network. Known as Pegasus Networks, it will provide internal links in Australia and access to PeaceNet, EcoNet, GreenNet, etc. Full operations should commence in September this year.

He is also working on providing links for the Asia Pacific region.

Anyone who wants to find out about these projects should write to Ian at Pegasus Networks, P.O. Box 368, Lismore 2480, Australia, or drop an electronic mail message to igc.pegasus.

Ian remains associated with the Rainforest Information Centre in an advisory capacity - he's still not disillusioned! In March and April he will be a resource person for rainforest conferences in Rotorua, New Zealand and Jakarta, Indonesia, organised by the Pacific Institute of Resource Management (New Zealand), and the World Council of Churches and Approtech Asia (Indonesia).

We don't like using new paper, but the recycled A3 paper is not of a good enough quality (at present) for our printer to use.

To compensate, we have planted a hundred trees on the river bank at the end of our street. We hope to have a solution to this problem before World Rainforest Report 13 is due..... Editor



NQ
574.52642
WOR



DONATIONS

THE RAINFOREST INFORMATION CENTRE needs substantial donations now to cover materials, printing, mail out, running costs, actions, and conservation workers overseas. Your support will assure support for the earth.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Please post the first form to ACF with your cheque, and the second directly to the RAINFOREST INFORMATION CENTRE. The Director Australian Conservation Foundation 672B Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122

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